



EPA's Ongoing Investigation of Groundwater: Second Round of Sampling Results

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What Is EPA Doing?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began an environmental investigation in the area around Interstate 25 and Logan Street in Denver during the Fall of 2004. The specific area lies between Kentucky and Mississippi and a few blocks to the east and west of Logan Street.

The primary purpose of the investigation is to determine if there is groundwater contamination under residential or commercial buildings and if it might pose any potential health risk to nearby residents. The contaminant of most interest is trichloroethylene (TCE), used mainly as a solvent to remove grease from metal parts. TCE can move from groundwater through soil and as a vapor enter buildings, usually through cracks or openings in the foundation slab or a crawl space.

What Did EPA Find?

Initially, EPA found that groundwater sampling from 15 of 16 locations did not detect TCE in the shallow water at approximately 33 feet. Subsequent sampling from deeper groundwater below a clay layer from one location (north of I-25 and on the east side of Logan Street) detected TCE at a level of 910 micrograms per liter or parts per billion (ppb). EPA collected additional samples in that area in deeper wells at approximately 45 feet. Results show a high level of TCE (approximately 500 ppb) in one well. Although the groundwater is not used for drinking water, these levels are well above the established federal and State of Colorado drinking water standard of 5 ppb.

EPA then installed more deep wells both north and south of I-25 to determine the extent of the contamination and determine if any threat to residents may exist. A total of 27 wells, both shallow and deep, have been installed. Of those, 3 deeper wells on Logan Street between Buchtel and Kentucky have shown TCE levels ranging from about 500 ppb to 1,000 ppb. The deeper wells east and west of Logan Street have shown only low levels from 3 ppb to 20 ppb.

What Did EPA Find? No Health Threat to Residents

In addition, a clay layer that exists in this area has been observed in all EPA wells. It separates the shallow from the deeper groundwater and appears to be acting as a barrier, keeping the contamination from migrating to the shallow groundwater. No significant groundwater contamination was found at more shallow depths.

Based on these sampling results, we do not believe that homeowners' health and indoor air is being impacted by the groundwater contamination present in this area.

What Will EPA Do Next?

EPA will continue to investigate the extent of the higher levels of TCE found along Logan Street. If we find contaminated groundwater at shallow depths under residential areas, we will conduct sampling in the home, as appropriate, to determine if there are vapors directly underneath the foundation and if indoor air sampling is warranted.

Give Us A Call!

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